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ABSTRACT

Northern Lights Vocational Services of Ontario (Canada) is an agency that grew out of a need for people to have access to vocational services on a local basis. It replaces traditional, facility-based testing technologies with new tools that can be used in a community setting. The agency has developed an approach to vocational evaluation and assessment known as the Northern Lights Task and Time Analysis System. This guide lists seven skills of the assessor, and lists criteria associated with each skill. The skills are as follows: (1) work with the process--know that assessments have beginnings, middles and ends; (2) join with the person--relate to the person's individuality and "specialness"; (3) create a climate of acceptance and respect--avoid words, thoughts, gestures and tones that imply judgment or criticism; (4) take the Columbo approach--explore and question everything; (5) record all available information--look for patterns, explore possibilities; (6) analyze data in conjunction with the person--discuss what the person perceives as the outcome of his or her experiences in the process; and (7) be creative--use humor and have fun. (LLL)

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SEVEN SKILLS OF THE ASSESSOR

[Val Lougheed] [Bev Hunter]

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AGENDA

1. The CRITERIA for a good assessment.

2. Conscious use of SELF as the MAIN ASSESSMENT TOOL.

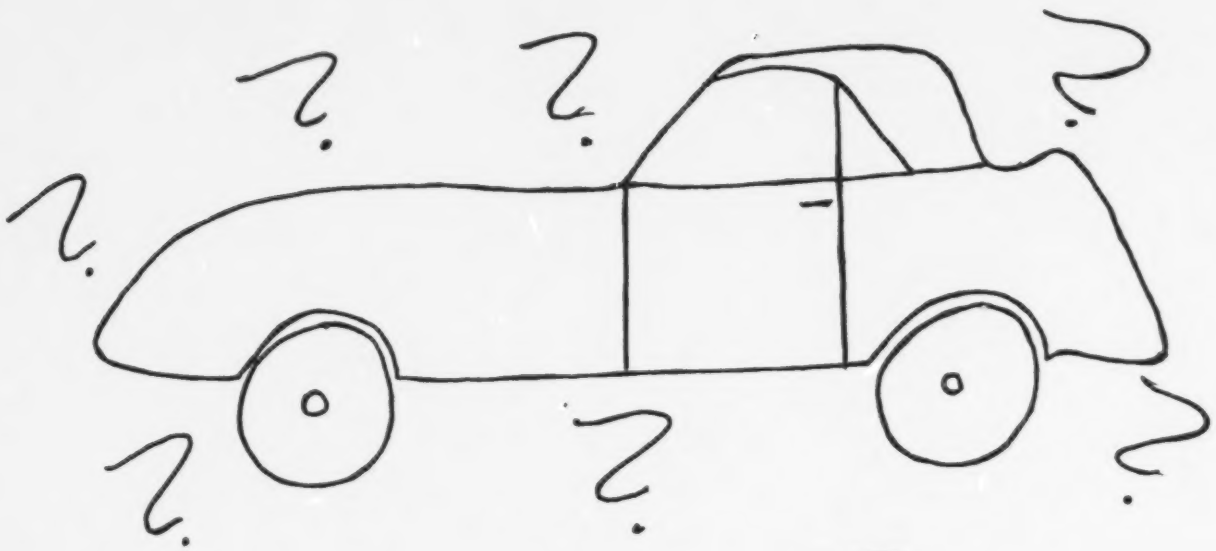
3. The SEVEN SKILLS of the assessor.

4. Summary

5. Questions

ASSESSMENT

ASSESSMENTS



SKILL #1

WORK WITH THE PROCESS

* KNOW THAT ASSESSMENTS HAVE BEGINNINGS, MIDDLES AND ENDS
* PATIENTLY AND SKILLFULLY MOVE THROUGH TIME
* DON'T RUSH TO A CONCLUSION
* MAKE SPACE FOR GROWTH

SKILL #2

JOIN WITH THE PERSON

* TAKE A SHOULDER TO SHOULDER APPROACH
* HONOUR THE PERSON FOR WHO THEY ARE
* RELATE TO THE PERSON'S INDIVIDUALITY AND "SPECIAL"NESS
* SHARE THE EXPERIENCE OF THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS TOGETHER

SKILL #3

CREATE A CLIMATE OF

ACCEPTANCE AND RESPECT

* BE IN HARMONY WITH ALL ASPECTS OF THE PERSON'S EXPERIENCE AND THEIR ENVIRONMENT
* AVOID WORDS, THOUGHTS, GESTURES AND TONES THAT IMPLY JUDGMENT OR CRITICISM
* DO NOT UNDULY INFLUENCE THE PERSON OR INTERFERE WITH THE NATURAL PROCESS

SKILL #4

TAKE THE COLUMBO APPROACH

* BE CURIOUS AND INTERESTED
* EXPLORE AND QUESTION EVERYTHING
* QUESTION AND THEN QUESTION SOME MORE
* BE NON-INTRUSIVE
* OBSERVE ALL ASPECTS OF THE PERSON IN THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

SKILL #5

RECORD ALL AVAILABLE INFORMATION

* BE SENSITIVE TO EVERY BIT OF INFORMATION
* BE LIKE A SPONGE
* LOOK FOR PATTERNS, EXPLORE POSSIBILITIES

SKILL #6

ANALYZE DATA IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE PERSON

* DISCUSS WHAT THE PERSON PERCEIVES AS THE OUTCOME OF THEIR EXPERIENCES IN THE PROCESS
* DISCUSS WHAT OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE
* USE THE PROBLEM-SOLVING PROCESS
* BE HONEST

SKILL #7

B E C R E A T I V E

* USE HUMOUR
* BE A PRAGMATIC OPTIMIST
* HAVE FUN

Understanding the outer

is knowledge

Understanding the inner

is wisdom

Control of others shows influence

Control of self reveals mastery

The Tao flows everywhere

Creating

Inspecting

Remaining silent and unknown

It rejects nothing

Possesses nothing

Encourages but does not dominate

Benjamin Hoff
The Way to Life

NORTHERN LIGHTS VOCATIONAL SERVICES

GENERAL INFORMATION

Northern Lights Vocational Services is an agency that grew out of a need for people to have access to vocational services on a local basis. Operating in tandem with the Ministry of Community and Social Services (Vocational Rehabilitation Services), the Workers' Compensation Board, and insurance companies, Northern Lights has designed a system of services that can adapt to any environment and meet any vocational need.

Northern Lights replaces traditional, facility-based testing technologies with new tools that can be used in a community setting. This has led to the development of a whole new approach of vocational evaluation and assessment known as the Northern Lights Task and Time Analysis System^{c}.

The Northern Lights Task and Time Analysis System^{c} focuses on the client. This approach is based on the actual job tasks (criterion-referenced testing) which have been specifically designed for the person being assessed (single subject design). The client is motivated and encouraged to take an active role in their own rehabilitative future through a monitored self-evaluation format.

The Northern Lights system provides people with help during the entire process of vocational rehabilitation -- from start to finish. The referring agency selects the specific service their client needs and an individual or small-group program is designed.

Our range of services includes:

VOCATIONAL EVALUATIONS to determine functional capacities.

VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS when it is important to know a person's capability and suitability for a specific job, a modified job, or competitive employment in general.

ON-THE-JOB COACHING or SKILLS TRAINING for people who require specific skills to get or keep a job.

JOB PLACEMENT SERVICES for people who need help getting a job.

Northern Lights has developed unique, functional management and supervisory techniques. Our organizational structure accommodates and supports a number of professional staff living all across the province.

Northern Lights provides staff training on the use of the Task and Time Analysis System^{c}, as well as training in the general skills of assessing.

Val Lougheed, B.S.W., C.S.W.

Val Lougheed graduated from Ryerson Polytechnical Institute in 1978 with a Bachelor of Social Work degree. During the first ten years of her career, she worked in a number of geographical areas, ranging from the Yukon Territory to rural Ontario. Val has had experience in a broad spectrum of social services, including Children's Aid, Income Maintenance, Vocational Rehabilitation, Young Offenders, and clinical Social Work.

In her work with a large Regional Facility for developmentally handicapped people in Ontario, Val was responsible for creating community-based alternatives to institutionalization in response to referrals. Her work took her all across the province during the first few years of the "multi-year plan". This experience had a significant impact on Val. Since that time, she has been a strong proponent of community-based, accessible services, especially for those living in rural and small urban areas.

In 1986, Val designed a prevocational assessment program to run in her home area of Haliburton County, in conjunction with the Ministry of Community and Social Services. This program was set up to run entirely in the community. Val also designed a new testing tool to evaluate the functional capacities of a person in real employment settings.

This program and the assessment tool have expanded into what is now known as Northern Lights Vocational Services. This agency provides vocational services to people all across Ontario and is staffed with a rich variety of professionals including social workers, vocational specialists, psychologists, occupational therapists and physiotherapists. All services are provided on a local basis and the bulk of work is completed in rural areas.

In her spare time, Val is President of the Canadian Federation of Sleddog Sports. In this capacity, she recently returned from Austria where she represented Canada in the bid to have sleddog racing recognized as an official Winter Olympic Sport.

Bev Hunter, M.S.W., C.S.W.

Bev Hunter completed her undergraduate training at the University of Guelph (Honours Geography and Sociology) and the University of Windsor (Honours Social Work). In 1979, she graduated from University of Windsor with a Masters of Social Work degree.

Bev has worked in a variety of social services settings, including an inner city settlement house, adolescent group homes, income maintenance programs, family counselling centres, vocational rehabilitation services, and program consultation.

In 1988, Bev joined Northern Lights Vocational Services as a Consultant. In this capacity, Bev has developed new vocational programs, trained and supervised staff, and worked directly with clients in their home communities.